

# **Statement of Governor Haley Barbour**

**March 14, 2005**

“This past weekend was a good one for Mississippi’s 780,000 Medicaid recipients and the thousands who provide them health care. In fact, I suspect every Mississippian is glad this health care crisis is over.

Last Friday, when I called this unprecedented Special Session, I thought it was the best chance to get a quick solution to Medicaid’s running out of money and 780,000 people losing their health care coverage. This Special Session allowed a fresh start that brought a successful conclusion.

As we have said for weeks, there was only one place to turn to address this deficit and save Medicaid, and I am pleased that an agreement was reached between House and Senate leaders to do just that.

Many people deserve credit for this impressive turnaround from Friday’s failure to Sunday’s success.

Lt. Governor Amy Tuck and Senate Pro-Tem Travis Little encouraged me to call this Special Session and said the Senate was prepared to make it succeed.

Speaker McCoy and the House members who supported the compromise also deserve thanks.

State Treasurer Tate Reeves offered valuable advice over the weekend as different proposals were debated.

Dr. Warren Jones and the hard-working people at the Division of Medicaid have done the state an incredible service during this crisis.

Because of all of the good work last night, we can finally say with confidence today that Mississippi's Division of Medicaid can reimburse claims for health care services provided to Mississippi's needy. I am proud and grateful to be able to make that statement."

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